



February 2005

ZOOM

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USA AT THE MOVIES

■ Oscar® Savvy

1. The two nomination categories for an Oscar® in 2005 of Spanish film "The Sea Inside" are:

- A. Makeup
- B. Foreign Language Film
- C. Directing

2. Which country has had the most Foreign Language Film awards?

- A. Japan
- B. Argentina
- C. Italy
- D. Spain

3. Who was the youngest person ever to receive an Oscar® statuette?

- A. Haley Joel Osment
- B. Shirley Temple
- C. Tatum O'Neal
- D. Elijah Wood

4. Who has won the most Oscars®?

- A. Walt Disney
- B. Peter Jackson
- C. Clint Eastwood
- D. Alfred Hitchcock

5. Which movie received the most nominations in 2005?

- A. *Finding Neverland*
- B. *Ray*
- C. *Sideways*
- D. *The Aviator*

Watch Oscars® night in Spain on **Monday, February 28**, from early morning on Canal+.

What are the Oscars® exactly? Also called the Academy Awards®, they are handed out annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences® (AMPAS), a professional organization comprised of over 6,000 artists and craftsmen from the movie industry.

The first ceremony took place on May 16, 1929 and the winners were notified prior to the awards ceremony. The following year the organizers introduced sealed envelopes, and since that time the then winners have not been known until the envelopes are opened publicly.

The famous Oscar® statuette dates from the 1920s. It is a figure of a knight standing on a reel of film, hands gripping a sword. Initially Oscar® was made of gold-plated bronze; today it is gold-plated britannium. The origins of the nickname are not clear. A popular story says that an AMPAS employee thought the statuette resembled her Uncle Oscar. Although the Academy itself did not use the nickname officially until 1939, staff members and media did so much earlier.

Oscar® winners are determined by members of AMPAS. Starting in December of each year, Nominees are voted upon. In the next stage, which this year started in February, members vote for the winners.

Check with the quiz on the left if you are Oscar® savvy. Correct answers are on page 4.

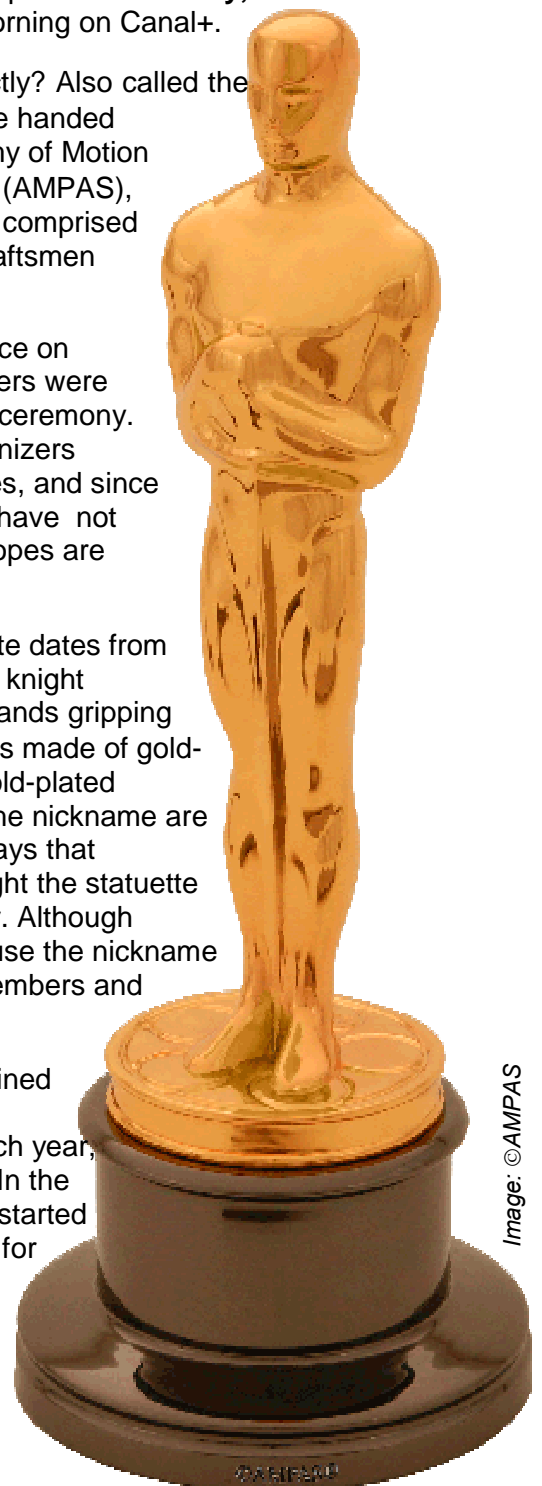


Image: © AMPAS

■ Movies and Modern USA

Over the past 15 years, for every high-tech, stunt-filled *Mission Impossible*, there are serious and thought-provoking films from the United States such as *American Beauty* and *The Hours*, as well as complex and sophisticated movies such as *Traffic*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Magnolia*, and *About Schmidt*. What is therefore remarkable about contemporary American movies is their diversity, their effort to explore the social and psychological dimensions of life, and their ability to combine entertainment with artistry.

Films of the past 15 years also introduced to their audiences a fresh generation of actors. Kevin Spacey, Russell Crowe, Brad Pitt, John Cusack, Matt Damon, Edward Norton, Frances McDormand, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Julianne Moore do not conform to the classic notion of a Hollywood star, but they have given performances as vivid and as distinctive as their predecessors. Unlike the stars of Hollywood's classic era, who always seemed to be playing themselves (Cary Grant, John Wayne, Elizabeth Taylor), contemporary U.S. actors disappear into their roles, playing parts that differ from one movie to the next.

Movies from the U.S. have focused on human relationships and private feelings, not just on problems of a particular time and place. They tell tales about romance (*High Fidelity*), intrigue (*L.A. Confidential*), success and failure (*Chicago*), and moral conflicts (*The Insider*). This approach to filmmaking reflects, in part, the traditional U.S. faith in the importance of the individual.

Text adapted from: Film: Movies and Modern America by Richard Pells available at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/0403/ijse/ijse0403.htm>

■ Big Bucks

U.S. movies are of course not only about art but also about money.

The U.S. motion picture industry produces much of the world's feature films and is dominated by several large studios, based mostly in Hollywood, California.

Although thousands of movies are produced each year, only a small number of them account for most box office receipts. Most films do not make a full return on their investment from domestic box office revenues, so filmmakers rely on profits from television and DVD sales and rentals. Major film companies are also receiving a growing portion of their revenue from abroad.

Still, all of the top-ten all-time worldwide box office successes were produced in the United States. According to Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com) *Titanic* sets the record with \$1.8 billion worth of receipts, followed by *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* with \$1.1 billion and *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (\$968 million).

Text based in part on Bureau of Labor Statistics information

Image: melanie k. (stock.xchg)

■ African-American Faces of Oscars®

February Is African-American History Month

2005 is a record year for the number of Academy Award® nominations for African American actors. The nominations include two for best actor (Don Cheadle for "Hotel Rwanda" and Jamie Foxx for "Ray"), two

for best supporting actor (Morgan Freeman for "Million Dollar Baby" and Jamie Foxx again for "Collateral") and one for best supporting actress (Sophie Okonedo for "Hotel Rwanda").



Jamie Foxx ©AMPAS



Don Cheadle ©AMPAS

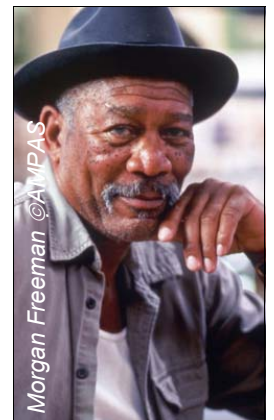


Sophie Okonedo ©AMPAS

Members of the Academy appreciated Jamie Foxx in two very different roles. In "**Collateral**" Foxx plays a taxi driver who one night has to deal with an assassin. "Foxx fires up the screen with the power and subtlety of a born star," said a critic for *Rolling Stone* magazine.

In "**Ray**" Foxx portrays the legendary soul singer, Ray Charles. According to *The New York Times* newspaper, "Ray succeeds, to an unusual extent for a movie of this kind, in presenting a vivid, convincing portrait of an artist." The newspaper critic adds that "what makes Ray such a satisfying picture, in spite of some shortcomings and compromises, is Mr. Foxx's inventive, intuitive, and supremely intelligent performance."

In "**Million Dollar Baby**" Morgan Freeman plays one of the characters and the narrator of Clint Eastwood's story about a boxing trainer who works with a determined young woman in her attempt to establish herself as a champion boxer.



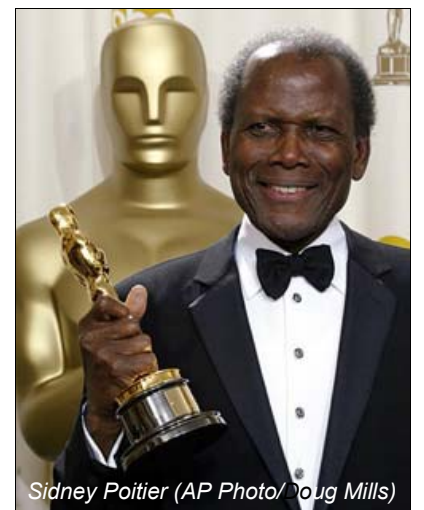
Morgan Freeman ©AMPAS



Halle Berry and Denzel Washington ©AMPAS

In "**Hotel Rwanda**", a true-life story, Don Cheadle plays a resort manager, Paul Rusesabagina, who houses over a thousand refugees during the 1995 genocide in Rwanda. Sophie Okonedo received an Oscar® nomination for playing Rusesabagina's wife.

According to a *San Francisco Chronicle* critic, "Paul's brief, sudden breakdown, played by Cheadle... Crystallizes the character and is the stuff of movie legend. Remarkably, Okonedo, as Paul's wife, is Cheadle's equal. The scene in which her terror and anger overtake her is unforgettable."



Sidney Poitier (AP Photo/Doug Mills)

In 2002 for the first time in the 74-year history of the Academy Awards® ceremonies, a pair of African Americans captured the Best Actor and Best Actress awards.

Halle Berry won for her performance in "**Monster's Ball**" and is the first African American to win the Oscar® for Best Actress. "Oh, my God," Berry sobbed between words when her name was announced. "This moment is so much bigger than me. This moment is for Dorothy Dandridge, Lena Horne, Diahann Carroll. ... This is for every nameless,

faceless woman of color who now has a chance because this door has been opened."

Denzel Washington, who previously had won Best Supporting Actor in 1989 for his role in the movie "Glory," won Best Actor for his role as a rogue cop in the movie "**Training Day**." Washington was the second African American to win the top award. Sidney Poitier won the Oscar® for Best Actor in 1963 for his role in the movie "**Lilies of the Field**." He was given an Honorary Award in 2002.

From Washington File

Activity Page

Win a Prize!

To take part in a drawing for the book: *"Acting Hollywood Style"*, answer to the following question:

What material is the Oscar® statuette made of?

Send your answer to:
irc@embusa.es

Give your name and address.

The deadline is March 15, 2005.

Good Luck!

The winners from the previous issue will soon receive their prizes by mail.

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About ZOOM

Zoom is online at
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■ Oscars® Quiz Answers

1. Makeup and Foreign Language Film
2. Italy has had 10 Oscars® in the Foreign Language Film category.
3. Shirley Temple received a juvenile Academy Award® at 6 years.
4. Walt Disney has received 26 Academy Awards®.
5. *The Aviator* has 11 nominations.

■ Word Formation

In the text below use the word given in capitals at the end of each line to form a word that fits in the space in the same line. See the 2 examples at the beginning.

Academy Awards® are presented for outstanding individual
or collective efforts in the movie industry in up to 25 regular
categories. In _____ to the regular annual awards
conferred by vote of the _____, the AMPAS Board of
_____ can vote for a number of other awards including
_____ Awards. Those particular Awards may be given
for outstanding _____ not otherwise recognized by the
regular awards. They may be given for _____ distinction
in lifetime achievement or exceptional _____ to the state
of _____ picture arts and sciences. They have been
_____, for instance, to Blake Edwards for his
extraordinary body of film work, to _____ Jack Cardiff
for his distinguished _____ of light and color and to
Chuck Jones for the _____ of his classic cartoons.

~~STAND OUT~~

~~COLLECT~~

ADD

MEMBER

GOVERN

HONOR

ACHIEVE

EXCEPT

CONTRIBUTE

MOVE

AWARD

CINEMATOGRAPHY

MASTER

CREATE

■ Glossary

craftsman - worker who performs with skill or dexterity

reel - a spool for film

nickname - an additional name or a familiar form of a proper name

resemble - look similar to

ballot - a vote

stunt - a difficult feat requiring great skill or courage, especially in movies

intrigue - a secret scheme

buck - a dollar (colloquially)

box office - an office in a cinema where tickets are sold

revenue - income, amount of money received in a period of time

underdog - an actual or predicted loser

sumptuous - rich, luxurious, magnificent

sneakily - stealthily, deviously

fogy - a person of old-fashioned habits and ideas